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Guideline for Maintaining Setbacks from On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems to Public Water Systems

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This guideline is intended to provide a rationale and approach for applying Department requirements with setbacks from on-site sewage disposal systems to public water mains. It is the intent of this guideline to prevent the potential for contamination of water supplies when developing property. All septic systems including leach lines, seepage pits, or other are referred to as **on-site wastewater system (OSWS)** by definition for this guideline in the interest of context.

MINIMUM SETBACKS FROM SUBSURFACE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS TO PUBLIC WATER MAINS, FLUMES AND AQUEDUCTS

PUBLIC WATER MAINS are defined as smaller diameter, pressure water lines supplying water from the district facility to end users. The recommended setback is 25 feet from the edge of the water easement, unless the water main trench depth is greater than five feet. Then a 5:1 setback is required from the edge of the easement to the **OSWS** calculated on water main trench depth. It is recommended that the water purveyor as depicted on the layout confirm all water main easement locations. Several water districts require this prior to plan check approval. In some locations blanket waterline easements will need to be quitclaimed before a layout can be approved.

Title 22 of the California Administrative Code, Section 6430 states that:

- The horizontal distance between pressure water mains and parallel OSWS shall not be less than 10 feet.
- OSWS shall not be installed within 25 feet horizontally of a low head (5 psi or lower pressure) water main.
- Perpendicular Crossing of a tight sewer pipe shall be at least 12 inches below a pressure water main.

These separation distances may be increased if site conditions justify a need as determined by the Department of Environmental Health (DEH).

DEH policy will allow for the following setback reductions on a case by case basis:

- A 5:1 setback is taken from the water main to the sewage disposal system based on pipe depth and verification from the water purveyor that no additional water lines will be installed in between these two points.
- A 10-ft. setback to the water main if the water line is no more than 24 inches deep, if it is established that no additional water lines will be installed within the water main easement, and this is the only way to develop an existing, legal lot.

FLUMES are defined as an aboveground or belowground channel, (open or covered), conveying water between water supplier facilities; such as between surface reservoirs.

Above ground flume:

- *Sewer lines* down-gradient from the edge of the easement are to be no closer than 10 feet to the edge of the easement.
- *Sewer lines* up-gradient from the edge of the easement are to be no closer than 25 feet to the edge of the easement. If the condition of the flume presents a risk of contamination, the setback to on-site wastewater systems will be increased to 100 feet from the edge of the easement.

Below ground flume: Below ground flumes are generally open water conduits at grade level.

- *Sewer lines* down-gradient are to be no closer than 25 feet from the edge of the easement.
- *Sewer lines* up-gradient from the easement are to be no closer than 100 feet from the edge of the easement.

AQUEDUCTS are defined as the easement or right of way through which large diameter pipelines run.

Pipelines (Barrels):

- The standard setback is 100 feet from the edge of the pipeline easement (aqueduct) to *sewer lines*. This should be used for creating new lots on all parcel maps and subdivisions, as well as layout approvals. All proposed maps must have input from the water purveyor to confirm the aqueducts are depicted accurately on the map.
- If a 100-ft. setback from the edge of the easement is not possible, or the lot has a previous approval with a setback less than 100 feet to an OSWS, the design encroachment proposal must be reviewed and approved by the water purveyor. This must be accomplished in order for this Department to consider an updated layout design approval. **(This is not an option for creating new lots.)** Site conditions may still prohibit a setback reduction if a risk of pollution is determined.

Unlined tunnels:

- *On-site wastewater systems* shall be located no closer than 200 feet from the edge of the tunnel easement.



Prior to approval of any septic system design:

- Confirm the waterline easement location with the water purveyor. It is recommended the water purveyor provides written confirmation or a stamp on the layout to show they agree with the waterline easement depiction.
- If a blanket waterline easement exists, quitclaim the blanket easement and establish a waterline easement with the water purveyor.
- An aqueduct easement may require additional permits from the water purveyor in order to establish pipeline and excavation depth.
- Any proposal to cross an aqueduct or waterline easement with tight sewer pipe must be reviewed and approved by the water purveyor. The recommended design is a continuous sleeve from edge to edge of the aqueduct easement using a cast-iron pipe with welded joints. The sewer pipe crossing the aqueduct shall have at least an 18-inch separation above or below the pipeline, and cross at a perpendicular angle to the aqueduct. Minimum fall across the sewer pipe shall be 1/8 inch per foot. Refer to the **DEH Land Use** Policy 19, dated June 20, 1992 on crossing easements with sewer tight lines.
- Any parcel map or subdivision that has an aqueduct on, or within 100 feet of the project boundaries, shall have the project reviewed by the water purveyor to confirm the location of the aqueducts are depicted accurately on the project designs. A copy of purveyor's review and concurrence shall be included with the project submittal.
- Due to the excavation depth and shoring for the construction of aqueduct pipelines, it is expected that the entire width of the easement will be excavated to install or repair a pipeline.